



W6ECK

Kensington/El Cerrito Amateur Radio News

August 2023

KARO ECHO Newsletter

KARO ECHO

Serving the communities of El Cerrito and Kensington, California

Web: www.karoecho.net

Facebook:
[KARO ECHO facebook](#)

Email: info@karoecho.net

Important Frequencies

KE Primary: 146.415 MHz
Weekly Net, Thurs. 1900

KE Secondary: 146.475 MHz
4Cs Repeater: 145.110 MHz
(TX down 600 with PL 82.5)

Monthly Meetings

In-person meetings
2nd Monday of each month
7:00 pm
([online via Zoom also](#))

Kensington Comm. Center,
59 Arlington Blvd,
Kensington, CA

The next meetings are:

Aug 14th, 2023
Sept 11th, 2023

[Meeting minutes are on the website](#) in the past events page.

What's New

KARO ECHO Monthly Meeting, Aug 14th, 1900 — **In-person or Zoom**

The monthly KARO ECHO meeting will be **in-person or virtual (Zoom)**, at 1900, Monday Aug 14th. The meeting will feature a presentation by Mike Patterson N6JGA, ARRL East Bay Section Manager. [Full agenda link](#).

Save the Date for the KARO ECHO Fall Simulated Emergency Test (SET)

The Fall KARO ECHO Simulated Emergency Test (SET) exercise will be Saturday Oct. 14th, from 1000 — 1200. Please save this date and plan to participate.

KPH Tour in Fall

Following the KPH historical marine station presentation from Richard Dillman scheduled for our September 11 meeting we are arranging a field trip tour of the historical station in Point Reyes. [Please RSVP through this web form to confirm your attendance for either Sat. Sept 16 or Sept 30](#). Space is limited to 8 for each tour. It will be first come first serve and we will try to arrange additional dates if there is high demand. Plan on a time commitment of roughly 8am to 3pm.

Volunteer as a Elmer for New Members

We are seeking volunteers to be to mentor new hams as they join KARO ECHO. Please send a note indicating your interest in being a mentor (or being mentored) to elmer@karoecho.net. The time commitment is not large as we hope to establish a large pool of potential elmers to spread the load. Rhys AK6BA will be taking on the logistics of onboarding new members and will connect them to elmers.

Pacificon Oct 20-22

The [biggest west coast ham conference, Pacificon](#), will be held October 20-22, in San Ramon. [Discounted advanced registration is available until Oct. 1](#)

Classes for Licensing or Upgrade Being Offered by Don NI6A

KARO ECHO Elmer Don NI6A is offering license instruction. Here is a [link to a syllabus and further information](#). RSVP to ni6a@arrl.net as a student or a helper.

New Additions to the Website

[Updated KARO-ECHO Disaster Communications Plan](#)
[Considering and Respecting Volunteers in Non-profit Community Organizations](#)
[How to Obtain Your Ham Ticket and Upgrade](#)

LOCAL NETS**KARO ECHO Simplex Nets**

146.415 MHz (primary)

146.475 (secondary)

Voice net: Thursday, after the West Contra Costa RAC-ES Net, but not before 1900 hours local time.

Digital net: Monday, 1900

West Contra County ACS/RACES Net

145.110 MHz repeater (TX down 600 with PL 82.5)
Thursday: 1845 local time

Contra Costa County HF

EmComm/RACES Net
3893 kHz. Thursday, 1830

American Red Cross of the Bay Area (ARCBA)

WW6BAY Repeater
443.975 MHz
TX +5 MHz, PL 100 Hz
Wednesday: 2000 local time

BOARD MEMBERS

President: Howdy KE6BEE

Vice-Pres: Frans KJ6IUV

Treasurer: Annette KJ6SWK

Secretary: Tom KN6BUY

Em. Coor: Howdy KE6BEE

Outreach/PR Manager:

Blake KN6CMP

Web-maestro: Rob K6RJM

Board member at large:

Hal KK6NDF

Net Manager and Newsletter

Editor: Howdy KE6BEE

What's New *(continued)***First Wed. Neighborhood nets and Communication Hub Activities**

West county EmComm net out of Richmond at 11 am (starts after the Richmond siren test) FRS/GRMS simplex (on Ch.19, secondary Ch. 17), followed by a ham net on the [WA6KQB 440 repeater](#) with WA6DUR repeater as secondary (see WA6DUR freq. information below)

East Richmond Heights, ham operators check-in at 1845 on Walt's WA6DUR repeater 442.150 +5 offset and PL tone 107.2Hz.

EC4 (central El Cerrito Hills) CERT Net, Ch. 2 (462.5875), at 1845

EC9 (north El Cerrito Hills) CERT Net, Ch. 15 simplex (462.550), at 1900

East Richmond Heights, Ready-2-React Net, Ch. 7 (462.7125), at 1930

EC7 and EC8 (north El Cerrito) CERT net, Ch.4 (462.6375), at 2000

Ken6 (SW Kensington) CERT net, on first Tuesdays, Ch. 6 (462.6875) at 1900

Richmond simulated EOC net, first Thursdays at 1030, on three simplex frequencies in this order: 147.450, 441.000, 223.400

Albany Radio Net, Wed. (weekly) 1900 on Ch.19 [Albany Radio groups.io](#)

Contra Costa County HF EmComm net, Thurs. (weekly) 1830, 3893kHz LSB

[Coordination of neighborhood FRS/GMRS frequencies can be found here.](#)

New Local Ham Licenses

New El Cerrito licenses issued: none for this month

New Kensington licenses issued: none for this month

New Welcome New KARO ECHO Members

Allison Cooper, El Cerrito (not licensed yet)

Action - Contribute to this Newsletter

Content for this newsletter is always welcome. Anyone with events or other content suggestions please send them to the newsletter editor Howdy ke6bee@arrl.net

What's New *(continued)*

National Night Out Radio Exercise Report

On Aug 1, during the National Night Out block parties, KARO ECHO was asked by the Fire Dept and CERT program to send radio operators to as many parties as possible and report a head count back to a central net control operator as an exercise and demonstration of radio communications across the area. [Nine KARO ECHO operators reported from 29 sites \(about 2/3 of the total\), with a cumulative head count of about 850 people at the sites reported.](#)

Albany Bulb Parks On The Air (POTA) Activation

The first KARO ECHO Parks On The Air (POTA) activation took place on Aug 5th at Albany Bulb. A total of 23 contacts were made with at least 10 on each side of UTC midnight, so we qualified as valid activation over two calendar day, even though we only operated 5 hours. There was a significant X-class flare during our operation period that interrupted HF propagation for a while, but we had successful HF contacts before and after that event. Contacts were made using VHF/UHF voice, and 15m, 20m, and 40m FT-8 and voice.

Online payments to KARO ECHO

It is now possible to pay KARO ECHO membership online through PayPal. No PayPal account is required. Use the [donate button on the KARO ECHO home](#) page, or under the heading “[Get Involved—Join](#)”. Your dues and donations are the source of funds for our ongoing costs of operation, as well as installing equipment we need to have in place for effective emergency operations. Currently, we are planning to install additional antennas and patch boxes in El Cerrito and Kensington to give easy outdoor access to high quality communication for operators deployed various public spaces.

[Donate](#)



Treasurer's Report

KARO-ECHO Treasurer's Report

As of August 11, 2023

	Credits	Debits	Bank Balance	Notes
Balance Forward from 7/7/2023			\$1,993.59	
Since last report:				
Membership	\$30.00		\$2,023.59	Allison Cooper
Mailbox, 6 months		\$115.00	\$1,908.59	
Balance 8/11/23			\$1,908.59	
34 Total paid members to date for 2023				

Activities

Weekly Net Control Rotation

Thanks go out to the volunteer stations who have been taking turns as Net Control Stations (NCS) each Thursday. This rotation has been working very well and everyone has been doing a great job. The regular NCS roster has 9 operators. Fill-ins are sometimes needed and we can always add another to permanent rotation. Please volunteer to give it a try. [Download the new Net Script for NCS operators.](#)

Below are the **new scheduled dates** for each operator next year. The [KARO ECHO google calendar](#) also has these assignments and can be found at the bottom of the events page. Add to your electronic calendar By pressing the “+GoogleCalendar” button in the lower right.

Net control is a skill that many operators should have and regularly practice. Please contact Howdy ke6bee@arrl.net if you are interested in taking a net control assignment.

Callsign	Name	Assigned Dates (skipped: Thanksgiving 11/23/2023)							
KE6BEE	Howdy Goudey	3/23/2023	5/25/2023	7/27/2023	9/28/2023	12/7/2023	2/8/2024	4/11/2024	
KK6NDF	Hal Graboske	3/30/2023	6/1/2023	8/3/2023	10/5/2023	12/14/2023	2/15/2024	4/18/2024	
KM6HBO	Jamuel Starkey	4/6/2023	6/8/2023	8/10/2023	10/12/2023	12/21/2023	2/22/2024	4/25/2024	
KN6BUY	Tom Fattaruso	4/13/2023	6/15/2023	8/17/2023	10/19/2023	12/28/2023	2/29/2024	5/2/2024	
K6RJM	Rob McNicholas	4/20/2023	6/22/2023	8/24/2023	10/26/2023	1/4/2024	3/7/2024	5/9/2024	
KE6HCE	Armando Picciotto	4/27/2023	6/29/2023	8/31/2023	11/2/2023	1/11/2024	3/14/2024	5/16/2024	
KJ6IUV	Frans Kuypers	5/4/2023	7/6/2023	9/7/2023	11/9/2023	1/18/2024	3/21/2024	5/23/2024	
KN6CMR	Susan Yeaman	5/11/2023	7/13/2023	9/14/2023	11/16/2023	1/25/2024	3/28/2024	5/30/2024	
KK6ZPM	Karen Fenton-Leong	5/18/2023	7/20/2023	9/21/2023	11/30/2023	2/1/2024	4/4/2024	6/6/2024	

Thursday Net Training Exercises

Following the net check-ins every Thursday at 1900 on 146.415, KARO ECHO usually runs a training exercise to learn and practice skills that are important for successful disaster communications.

[A list of potential training exercises](#) is posted and maintained on the training page of the website.

[A log of our check-in counts can be found here](#). Howdy KE6BEE typically updates this document in real time during the net, so you can check it against your log during or after the net.

For 2020: 1008 check-ins, avg. 21/week, high of 28, 72 unique callsigns

For 2021: 934 check-ins, avg. 19/week, high of 25, 55 unique callsigns

For 2022: 944 check-ins, avg. 19/week, high of 27, 59 unique callsigns, avg. 5 digital check-ins per week

For 2023: 650 check-ins, avg. 20/week, high of 25, 59 unique callsigns, avg. 6 digital check-ins per week

Thanks for your participation. Keep it up!

About KARO ECHO

KARO ECHO is the name of the Kensington Amateur Radio Operators and the El Cerrito Ham Operators mutual benefit association, an all-volunteer non-profit group of amateur radio operators providing auxiliary communications for the cities of Kensington and El Cerrito in the event of a disaster. KARO ECHO works with CERT (Community Emergency Response Teams) in Kensington and El Cerrito, but is not an official part of the CERT program.

Monthly in-person meetings of KARO ECHO are on the 2nd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm, in-person at the Kensington Community Center (KCC) as well as online using Zoom (hybrid meetings).

Yearly membership dues are \$30/year for individuals, \$40/year for a family membership. Payments can be given to the Treasurer at monthly meetings or mailed to the address below. Participation is welcome independent of paid membership, but only licensed amateur radio operators who are dues paying KARO ECHO members will be allowed to vote on KARO ECHO business. Dues cover our 510c3 registration, post office box, web page, station operating manuals and more. Your input on useful expenditures to aid emergency communications is welcome.

Mail to: KARO ECHO, PO Box 2025, 6324 Fairmont Ave, El Cerrito, CA 94530-3651

Please see our website for more information: www.karoecho.net

You can contact the KARO ECHO board by email: info@karoecho.net

KARO ECHO Facebook

The [KARO ECHO Group on Facebook](#) has a lot of good information, more than is contained on our website. There is a whole wide world of emergency communications information at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/> Check it out and be inspired of what we can do to help disaster victims in our community.

Weekly Training Net

The Karo-Echo Weekly Training Net meets every Thursday evening immediately after the West Co Co County RACES/ACS Net; but not before 1900 on 146.415 MHz Simplex. Our secondary frequency is 146.475 MHz simplex. Details at <https://www.karoecho.net/events>

Newsletter Content Wanted

Any input on content you'd like to propose for inclusion in the KARO ECHO newsletter can be sent to Howdy ke6bee@arrl.net We welcome all ideas for content including announcements, events, etc.

KARO ECHO Field Day Video

Thanks to Frans KJ6IUV for taking video and editing a very nice [Field Day movies in 2023, and 2021](#).

Outreach, Education and Licensing

Local and Online Ham License Classes and Exams

Many ham license classes and exams are offered locally or entirely online. See a [list of opportunities on the KARO ECHO website](#)

Mutual Aid Presentation by Dan Goldstein

Daniel Goldstein KJ6KEU (the ARRL East Bay Section Emergency Coordinator and member of the Alameda County Sheriff's Communications Team) gave the presentation [EmComm Mutual Aid in a Digital World on Sept. 10.](#)

ARRL Learning Network Webinars

Visit the [ARRL Learning Network](#) (a members-only benefit) to register, check on upcoming webinars, and to view previously recorded sessions.

Training for Beginning Operators

Jay KJ6WSS, Edward KM6UBY and Karen KK6ZPM gave an introductory radio class May 23rd 2020 introductory radio class, with emphasis on the GMRS radio BTECH-V1. [A recording of the class and other resources are available here.](#)

Net Control Operator Training

Diane KK6RED, David KJ6AAT and Howdy KE6BEE taught an Apr 4th 2020 net control class. [The class recording is available here.](#)

EMCOMM related videos

See the CERT SET Youtube video link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=66DdgGLln4c&list=PLROOaUlKdrEgSID1bQjZojW3PzfURoEY-&index=144&t=0s>

Post Camp Fire GMRS organization

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=220&v=aZiSC4sgKYw&feature=emb_logo

Ham EXPO and RATPAC recordings

There are recordings of presentations made during past [OSO Today](#) Ham Expos [available for free here](#). In addition [RATPAC](#) organizes weekly live online ham radio presentations, and also offers a [large archive collection of free recordings](#) on a wide variety of ham radio topics.

ELMERING

An online elmering forum can be accessed by emailing elmer@karoecho.net or browsing the associated google group. More in-depth elmering/mentoring is available by request.

In the meanwhile, please check out the plethora of useful information at <https://www.karoecho.net> website.

KAROECHO.Net Website

Especially, check out the EVENTS Page (<https://www.karoecho.net/events>) and the WORKSTREAMS drop-down menu which will lead one to an extensive training page that provides online learning at your own pace. Everything from the very beginning to advanced EmComm operations is detailed. The RESOURCE page has many excellent outside links.

- ◆ This [new heading on the Events page](#) will be updated with recent additions to the website.
- ◆ If you are on Facebook, contribute to the KARO ECHO Facebook Group Page at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1451216838315743/>
- ◆ If you haven't already filled out the JOIN form please do. Find it as a drop down menu under "Get Involved" See <https://www.karoecho.net/join>
- ◆ A [follow-through novice primer](#) has been put on the website for new hams once they have bought their radio and want to learn more.
- ◆ A [dual-band antenna primer](#) for new hams who want to graduate from the rubber-ducky world
- ◆ Note that the Tram 1480 gain dual band antenna is currently still available for \$51 (no tax and free shipping) on ebay or from Home Depot. That and an inexpensive speaker tripod is a dynamite combination for portable operation. This antenna is equivalent to the Diamond X-200a antenna which sells at HRO for \$125.00 before taxes and shipping.
- ◆ For newbies, please visit <https://www.karoecho.net/workstreams/training> and read the study materials. It is all there except for hands-on experience. Ask questions!
- ◆ Following the Thursday evening net check-in, there is often a training session and/or discussion.
- ◆ All recent KARO ECHO [Minutes](#) will be found at our [Past Events page](#) We are now including past Executive Board Minutes as well. [Newsletters are on the Documents Page](#).

If you desire to be removed from this email list, please email info@karoecho.net

Other Resources

To make it easy for amateurs to evaluate RF exposure, ARRL provides an [RF exposure calculator](#) on its [RF Exposure page](#).

"ALERTWildfire" camera links in our area:

[William Rust Summit cam](#) [Wildcat Canyon cam](#) [Vollmer Peak cam](#)

[Vollmer Tower Top cam](#) [Pinole Ridge cam](#)

[View real-time data from any weather station in the state.](#)

[Zonehaven evacuation zone here by on this interactive map](#)

[Albany Radio Groups.io forum](#)

[Eastbay Resilience Groups.io forum](#)

[Marina Bay Neighbors and 1st Wed West county GMRS net](#)

The [HeyWhatsThat](#) website is an online tool that can map line of site paths with topography

KARO ECHO Classifieds

We are soliciting classified ads from KARO ECHO members, and friends, to facilitate gifting, swapping, selling radio gear and/or offering help/services such as loans of special equipment/tools, etc.

Please send any content to the newsletter editor, Howdy ke6bee@arrl.net

Available for free: B&K Precision 2120B oscilloscope - 20MHz bandwidth, dual trace, triggered sweep. Contact: Tom, KN6BUY, at tfat@sbcglobal.net

Many Rescued Towers Available with Technical Support

25G ROHN TOWER

4-10' sections, non-self supporting base plate and 2 wall braces. All parts are newly galvanized. The base plate is new. Cost to date is \$300.

25G ROHN TOWER

3-10' sections and base plate. Upper section needs a minor repair. Overall condition is good. No cost to date.

ROHN TYPE TOWER

5-10' sections that are similar to 25g Rohn design. Some repairs and re-galvanizing needed. The base plate will have to be fabricated. No cost to date.

The stacking towers shown above should be wall braced as most urban locations lack the space for guy wire bracing. These towers are designed for climbing and up to 30' unsupported. I recommend no more than 20' unsupported.

TRI-EX THD 54

5-12' sectioned crank up tower which requires guying. Total height is 40'. The tower is in good condition but needs a new winch and cable. Base plate included. No cost to date.

TRI-EX W36

2-20' section crank-up tower with newly fabricated base plate. Total height is 36'. Needs new winch and cable. Re-galvanizing is recommended. Cost to date is \$30.

TRI-EX W51

3-20' section crank-up tower with newly fabricated base plate. Total height is 51'. Needs new winch and cable. Re-galvanizing is recommended. Cost to date is \$200.

All of the towers shown can be extended with a antenna mast. 2-10' stacking sections plus a mast extension should be adequate for local vhf/uhf use. Large HF antennas will required a substantial self supporting crank-up tower or heavily guyed stacked sections. Radio towers are expensive when freight and sales tax is added. As an example, the ROHN tower at the top of the list would have a landed price of about \$1500. Fully restored, the shop and material cost of \$300 is only 20% of a new purchase. I do not charge for labor. Local ham operators have an opportunity to upgrade their station for a relatively low cost.

Contact Jay KJ6WSS via info@karoecho.net to discuss tower options and cost.